

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USINT HAVANA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, MASS, XA, CU, US

SUBJECT: TEXT OF NOON BRIEFING OF 2/15/78.

Q. ARE WE ON A NEW SUBJECT NOW?

A. YES, WE CAN GO TO A NEW SUBJECT.

Q. THE SECRETARY HAS AN APPOINTMENT AT 5 O'CLOCK WITH
CONGRESSMAN WILSON OF TEXAS. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT
THIS IS ABOUT?

Q. WE CAN'T HEAR THE QUESTION.

A. I DON'T KNOW.

THE QUESTION IS REGARDING --

Q. WOULD YOU ASK THE PEOPLE AS THEY GO OUT NOT TO TALK?

A. JUST A SECOND. IF THE PEOPLE LEAVING WILL QUIET DOWN
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A BIT WE'LL GO ON WITH THE BRIEFING.

THE QUESTION HAD TO DO WITH CONGRESSMAN WILSON'S MEETING
WITH THE SECRETARY THIS AFTERNOON AT 5, AND I DON'T HAVE
ANYTHING ON WHAT THAT REGARDS.

Q. BUT CAN YOU FIND OUT?

A. I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. KEN, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, WHAT WAS THE SECRETARY'S REACTION TO SENOR RAMON SANCHEZ-PARODIS' STATEMENT DESPITE US PROTESTS, NOTHING THE UNITED STATES CAN SAY OR DO WILL ALTER THE CUBAN COMMITMENT IN AFRICA?

A. LES, I GUESS BASICALLY ALL I CAN DO IS TO REITERATE OUR POSITION THAT WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE CUBANS THAT THERE CAN'T BE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS UNTIL THE CUBAN TROOPS ARE REDUCED. I CAN'T SPEAK FOR HOW THE CUBANS REACT TO THAT OR EXACTLY WHAT THE CUBANS WILL DO.

Q. RIGHT. BY REDUCED WE DIDN'T SAY -- I MEAN IF THEY SENT BACK A HUNDRED OR A THOUSAND, LEFT 19,000 --

A. WE'D LIKE TO SEE THE TROOPS WITHDRAWN.

Q. WITHDRAWN, O.K. NOW, IF I COULD FOLLOW THAT UP WITH ONE FOLLOW-UP QUESTION, SINCE THE SECRETARY SAID AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE WILL NOT CLOSE THE CUBAN INTERESTS SECTION BECAUSE, HE SAID, "IT HELPED US GET BACK A SHIP THAT WAS SEIZED BY THE CUBANS," I'M WONDERING IF THIS INTERESTS SECTION HAS SHOWN ANY SIMILAR ASSISTANCE IN GET-
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TING COMPENSATION FOR FOUR BILLION DOLLARS IN US PROPERTY SEIZED BY MR. CASTRO'S GOVERNMENT.

A. LES, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING SPECIFIC ON THAT. I WOULD ASSUME THAT THE QUESTION OF EXPROPRIATION WOULD BE SOMETHING THAT WILL BE TAKEN UP WITH THE CUBANS --

Q. IN OTHER WORDS --

A. -- AND THE US INTERESTS SECTION WOULD BE A LOGICAL PLACE TO MAKE THAT INQUIRY.

Q. YES. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU HAVE NO INDICATION THAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE INCREASING OF CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA BECAUSE THE INTERESTS SECTION HELPS US GET BACK SHIPS OF OURS THAT WERE SEIZED. AM I CORRECT IN THAT?

A. THE POINT THAT THE SECRETARY WAS MAKING IS THAT THE US INTERESTS SECTION IN HAVANA IS A VALUABLE CONTACT AS

PROBLEMS ARISE WITH CUBA.

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